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How to use this booklet

This booklet is a resource for Midwestern farmers, ranchers, and other rural landowners with an interest in promoting wildlife on their land. It provides ideas, strategies, and examples of incentives that support wildlife enhancement. By wildlife, we mean not only the traditional fish and game species, but all native species that can be enhanced on farmland, including plants, aquatic organisms, and invertebrates.

Although there is a section on innovative public sector incentives, we emphasize private sector incentives, because we believe these efforts best incorporate local innovation, are more citizen and community-driven, and are more flexible or better suited to a given local context. When possible, we describe examples that have been implemented in the Midwest. We also describe programs and initiatives from other parts of the country or in other countries that are applicable to the Midwest. Along with a description of each program, we provide contact information including web-site addresses when possible.

We hope that this booklet contributes to the dialogue among landowners, local groups, and wildlife professionals about how to successfully protect and manage wildlife and nature on a local level. The reader should note that many individual initiatives, programs, or projects are short-term, and thus, some of the information provided about a particular incentive may no longer be current. We try to emphasize the ideas or concepts behind an incentive, as well as the specifics for given examples.

We hope that the incentive strategies outlined in this booklet can be adapted to fit the financial and conservation needs of farms and communities in your area. To facilitate this process, there are idea sections throughout the document, as indicated by a light bulb graphic. These sections have specific suggestions on ways in which incentive programs may be relevant to Midwestern producers.

For more information, contact:
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www.iatp.org/enviroag

For an on-line version of this document, see http://www.iatp.org/labels/
Click on the "Resources" button on left side of e-page.
In the "library," click on the following publication by IATP staff:
Incentives for Wildlife Enhancement on Midwestern Farms

Incentives: categories and sources There many types of incentives that can be used to enhance the wildlife habitat value of agricultural lands, but most can be placed in one of the following general categories: financial or economic, technical assistance, and recognition. Likewise, there are many potential types of sources of these incentives. Two large, general categories are: private sector and government or public sector. This document covers all three types of incentives, with an emphasis on those that have income potential. Private sector and community-based (including local government) incentives are also emphasized, although some state government programs of special interest are included.

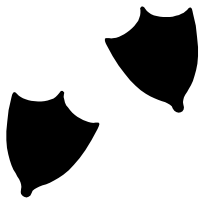
Financial Opportunities Faced with federal farm policies that increasingly stress market forces, farmers are looking for alternative sources of income. Instead of relying entirely on core agricultural production for on-farm income, farmers and ranchers are exploring other options. Managing land for wildlife is one alternative that can potentially supply income. In this document, we also describe incentives offered by private, non-profit organizations that provide funds for wildlife enhancement and nature conservation. Some of these have the potential for increasing market access and/or involve price premiums. Sometimes there is a public recognition component for their wildlife-friendly farm management and production activities. These approaches are at the heart of the concept of multifunctional agriculture (see below), wherein farmers market, or are otherwise rewarded for, the ecological, environmental, and other services that their farms provide.

Land Stewardship Opportunities Along with the farm crisis, there is an ecological crisis occurring across the United States. Unprecedented losses in biodiversity and wildlife habitat have occurred. While nature protection programs that set aside ecologically significant lands are important to protect biodiversity, farmers who practice multifunctional agriculture are also in a position to help preserve biodiversity. For example, ranches that feature rotational grazing, delayed haying, and prairie restoration plots help preserve biodiversity on agricultural lands. Farmers can have a positive impact as well by planting fall/winter cover crops for wildlife; maintaining riparian buffers, hedgerows, grassed field margins, and food plots; restoring wetlands; and managing forests or woodlots in a sustainable manner. The strategies that we outline in this document aim to support these efforts.

Multifunctional Agriculture Multifunctional agriculture is a concept that recognizes that agriculture produces much more than the food and fiber that feed and clothe us. Farms that practice a more sustainable agriculture can also "produce" wildlife habitat, biodiversity, good water quality, and scenic amenities. For example, farms can sequester carbon from the atmosphere, thus helping reduce the effects of global warming, as well as helping preserve the rural landscapes and small towns that are a part of the American identity. Multifunctional agriculture is a concept that seeks to reward farms for these otherwise unappreciated services, both in public policy (e.g., tax credits, farmland preservation programs) and in private incentive programs.

ECO-LABELING

Goal: Moving beyond organic labels and other environmental labels to market agricultural products from farms that "produce" wildlife habitat and nature.



Eco-labeling initiatives that distinguish products as wildlife friendly are on the cutting edge of "downstream" marketing incentives. These are incentives that reward farmers for good land stewardship in the marketplace. In many cases, they offer an alternative to organic labeling, by incorporating the goals of multifunctional agriculture into the label. Or, they can be used as an addition to organic labeling certification, providing a closer link with consumers who want to support good land stewardship. Some consumers are compelled to purchase a product not just because it is good for their health, but because it is good for the health of the environment, for family farms, or for the local community and economy. A farm is supported not just because it produces food products, but because it produces and sustains "nature" products. These types of ecolabels are relatively new, but they have the potential of attracting a substantial amount of consumer interest and market share.

There are two different types of labeling schemes that are used. First-party labeling involves claims made by the producer that the products are wildlife-friendly. For example, if as a producer you were to develop a first-party label for your products, you would probably sign an affidavit proclaiming that your farming operation is beneficial to wildlife or not harmful to predators. Or, you would agree to manage your operation in accordance with a farm best management plan. The downside of these initiatives is that with little or no regulation, it is hard for the consumer to tell which labels are legitimate. Many consumers are reluctant to buy products labeled as environmentally beneficial by the producers themselves.

Third-party labeling or certification provides an independent party that certifies a farm based on a set of agreed upon and scientifically sound criteria. Within the U.S., efforts by private, non-profit environmental organizations have led to certification for forest products (e.g., SmartWood) and marine products (e.g., Turtle-safe Shrimp, Dolphin-safe Tuna). The challenge for these programs remains to be consumer recognition of the labels. Recognition eventually leads towards developing a marketing niche where consumers will pay a premium for products they trust. Environmental labeling schemes in Europe are in some cases more advanced than they are in the US, in some cases regulated by the national governments, and consumer awareness of labels is higher. But products with environmental labels in these countries also struggle to compete with more conventional products.

Eco-labeling

Example 1: Salmon-Safe

Pacific Northwest The Pacific Rivers Council has developed a program in which an independent third party certifies growers as being salmon-safe if they "…include such practices as planting trees on streambanks, [incorporate] cover crops to control erosion, and [apply] sophisticated natural methods to control weeds and pests." Such practices, similar to best management practices promoted by some government agencies, are viewed as significant steps to improve the water quality and habitat of salmon. Landowners targeted include those with small farms and vineyards as well as sustainable rice producers with lands bordering key rivers. A Salmon-Safe logo is placed on the agricultural products that are certified.

Labeling schemes, such as this one, have the advantage of highlighting a high-profile species that consumers at the marketplace can identify and want to protect. So far, a total of forty growers and 10,000 acres have been certified. Growers do not necessarily gain a premium on their products, but the label has led to increased market share growth and market access. Salmon-Safe products are sold at Fred Meyer's stores in Washington, Alaska, Montana, Idaho, and Utah. To illustrate growers' enthusiasm about the program, when it was recently announced that the program might be discontinued due to financial limitations, growers offered to pay for the certification process as a way to reactivate the program.

If a farmer owns Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land bordering a river or stream system, they could build on this government program by also developing an eco-label based on the environmental benefits of the farm or ranch where the products are raised or grown. To be viable, this would have to be a collaborative effort among many landowners that own CRP land along a significant tract of a river system. For those that own CRP land within the Red River Valley or the Minnesota River Valley, for example, there is considerable potential for this strategy. In the Minnesota River Valley, there is a new incentive program called the Conservation Reserve and Enhancement Program (CREP) that is slated to protect 100,000 acres along the Minnesota River. CREP is collaboration between state and federal agencies that offers annual rental payments (federal CRP) and conservation easement payments (Minnesota State Reinvest in Minnesota Program).

Contact: Daniel Kent
Pacific Rivers Council
P.O. Box 10798
Eugene, OR 97440
Tel. (503) 232-3750
Website: www.pacrivers.org/salmonsafe/

(Pacific River Council Web-site: http://www.pacrivers.org/salmonsafe/; Personal Communication, Dan Kent, 11/99)

Example 2: Predator Friendly Wool

GROWER'S WOOL COOPERATIVE

CERTIFIED PRODUCERS OF PREDATOR FRIENDLY WOOL

Eco-labeling

"The business of taking our raw wool all the way to a finished product is time-consuming and expensive, but rewarding to those of us who seek an alternative to the wars between environmental and agricultural communities," says Rebecca Weed, co-founder, Grower's Wool Cooperative.

Montana Predator Friendly, Inc., a non-profit organization made up of biologists, environmentalists, and ranchers, has developed a "certification mark" or eco-label that is placed on wool produced on ranches that use non-lethal control of predators. As part of the certification process, the rancher must sign an affidavit committing their ranch to non-lethal predator control. Personnel from Predator Friendly also conduct interviews and ranch visits to assure that the standards are being met.

The Grower's Wool Cooperative is a separate organization of six ranchers whose products now carry the Predator Friendly label. Instead of directly killing predators, they use guard animals, such as llamas, burros and dogs to fend off predators, a practice that has been used for many years in Europe. As a result of the eco-label, these ranchers sell their products at a premium ($2 per pound, compared to 50 cents to $1 per pound for conventional products). Additional marketing strategies include a line of Predator Friendly wool products such as sweaters and hats that are sold locally and through the Nature Conservancy catalog and others. Here is an example of consumer response: "I wouldn't go into a store and pay $130 for a sweater that didn't mean something. But people do when I tell them the kind of ranch it came from. People like it because there's a story to tell behind the sweater." (New York Times, 12/14/97)

Most of the ranchers in this group operate small ranches and admit non-lethal methods are difficult to implement on larger operations. It is not a perfect process, but losses to predators are minimized. The cooperative and the eco-label have received quite a bit of media attention and other ranchers from around the U.S. are inquiring about the label.

Contact: **Thirteen Mile Lamb & Wool Co.** produces and markets certified Predator Friendly products
Becky Weed & David Tyler
13000 Springhill Road
Belgrade, Montana 59714
Tel. (406) 388-4945
email: becky@lambandwool.com
Website: www.lambandwool.com

(Market Growing for Wool That Comes From Predator-Friendly Ranches - Llamas, not guns, protect sheep from coyotes. The New York Times, 12/14/97; Predator Friendly: 'Green' Wool. Seattle Times, 12/18/96; Personal Communication, Rebecca Weed, 1/98)

Example 3: Tallgrass Beef

"When you buy Tallgrass Beef for your family, you are not only buying a nutritious, premium quality product. You are also doing your part to support a food system you can feel really good about." (Tallgrass Beef brochure)

Kansas The Tallgrass Prairie Beef eco-label was designed by a group of ten family ranchers in Kansas to promote and market grass-fed beef, beef raised on remnants of the tallgrass prairie. The ranchers formed a cooperative called the Tallgrass Prairie Producer's Co-op. Members of the cooperative signed an affidavit committing them to the humane treatment of the animals, to the principles of sustainable agriculture (e.g., low chemical input, grass-feeeding), and to the conservation of natural resources (e.g., low fossil fuel use, preservation of tallgrass prairie habitat). In addition, the eco-label made production and nutritional claims about their beef that were approved by the USDA. The USDA approved these claims on a case-by-case basis and required that they be "meaningful to the public" and supported by documentation. While claims about the nutritional qualities (e.g., "lean," "low fat") were strictly defined according to USDA standards, production claims were much more loosely defined and subject to change. Such claims included: "from family ranches," "grass-fed," "no antibiotics," "no hormones" and "free-range."

This eco-label, which was essentially a first-party certification label, was suspended recently due to rising costs of production and distribution. One rancher in the cooperative commented that, to be successful, they needed to dramatically increase their volume and make capital investments much sooner. Also, the rancher admitted that expansion of their relatively small consumer base (middle class and educated) would also have been helpful, and had some words of wisdom for farmers interested in starting their own eco-label: "proceed with caution." Furthermore, the effectiveness of the USDA approval remains uncertain. Without independent criteria and field verification, it may have been difficult for most consumers to judge whether the label claims were being met.

State or federal grants are available, but could be limited to research and demonstration costs. The potential for developing eco-labels that promote the principles of sustainable agriculture on family farms exists, but there are a lot of pitfalls as well. To help avoid these problems, cooperatives should get help from wildlife managers, conservationists, and marketing consultants as soon as they can. And, they should develop eco-labeling criteria that can be independently verified and easily understood.

Contact: Tallgrass Beef
RR1 Box 53
Elmdale KS 66850
Website: www.tallgrassbeef.com
email: tallgrss@valu-line.net
Tel. 1 (800) 992-5967 Fax (316) 273-8301

(Tallgrass Beef Web-site: http://www.tallgrassbeef.com/; Personal Communication, Tallgrass Prairie Producer, 12/99; Personal Communication, Meryl Evans, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, 12/99)

Example 4: Environmental Quality Initiative

Pennsylvania The Environmental Quality Initiative (EQI) is an eco-label that uses market incentives to promote environmental stewardship on Pennsylvania dairy farms. Revenue generated from a premium (of five cents per half-gallon) on products that carry the label is used to develop the EQI Stewardship Fund. Farms that receive excellent scores on an Environmental Farmstead Evaluation (standards adapted from Farm*A*Syst Program—see Appendix 1) are given funds directly from the premium. The rate is $0.50 per hundredweight on milk products. Those farms receiving scores that are just under the standard for receiving the premium can receive financial and technical assistance to improve water quality management. This includes cost-sharing (up to 80%) to install barnyard runoff controls, stream bank fencing, and waterway crossings. In addition, two farms will be selected to develop demonstration projects of these improvements on their farms (80% of costs up to $20,000). These farms will host on-farm field days to demonstrate these management techniques to other interested farmers.

The EQI eco-label is a project of the Dairy Network Partnership, a collaborative effort of environmental organizations, universities and federal agencies including the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture, Penn State University, the Rodale Institute, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In December of 1998, Fresh Field Markets stores in Philadelphia, Washington D.C. and Annapolis, MD, carried the first milk products to bear the EQI eco-label, Chesapeake Milk. "Natural by Nature" brand products from organic farms are expected to carry the label in the near future. If this happens, it may be the first example where a product has both organic certification and an additional independent label and certification for environmental criteria.

Such "organic plus" certification is a promising new area for independent organic producers. Organic or not, eco-labels can be supplemented with labels for regionality (location of production) and social criteria (e.g., "farmworker friendly"). This is one strategy that family farmers can use to compete with large scale or corporate farms, perceived as a threat to the organic community. Although this initiative focuses on water quality management issues, it could readily be adapted to include wildlife standards. A similar eco-label that incorporates wildlife and water quality standards could be developed for Midwestern dairy farms as well as other types of farm operations. Products could be marketed at local cooperatives, health food stores, and locally owned markets.

Contact: Lori Sandman
611 Siegriedale Road
Kutztown, PA 19530
Tel. (610) 683-1476; Fax (610) 683-8548
Website: www.eqinitiative.com
email: lsandm@rodaleinst.org

Example 5: Nature Co-operatives

The Netherlands Dairy, meat and vegetable farmers in Waterland, The Netherlands, have joined to together to develop an eco-label for their products. The label, featuring the image of a threatened bird species, signifies the farmers' commitment to creating and/or protecting the bird's habitat. Independent nature conservation organizations verify that the farmers create adequate wildlife habitat and provide labor and other resources for habitat protection and restoration. The eco-label also enhances opportunities for agri-tourism on the farms. Products are sold not only to local retail customers and local businesses, but to tourists as well.

With this arrangement, participants integrate wildlife enhancement and nature conservation in the direct-marketing framework of individual farms or farm cooperatives. Farmers may already have special environmental or other criteria in place that deal with production aspects. They may be organic certified; or they may sell uncertified, but natural or "no-chemicals" vegetables, or free-range chickens, or pasture-fed beef. Other ways to increase the customer base or further enhance the relationship with current customers should include an exploration of consumers' willingness to pay a premium for nature protection. If marketing potential exists, consider developing a wildlife-friendly eco-label and a set of criteria that can be independently verified by a third-party conservation organization.

Contact: Nature Co-op
NV Waterland
Jantine Bine, Jan Boom
Koemarkt 53-1
1441 DB Purmerend
The Netherlands
Tel. 31-299-437463

(Marketing Sustainable Agriculture: Case Studies and Analysis from Europe, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. 1999.)

Example 6: Park labels

France The regional parks of France (Parks Naturals Regioneaux) have developed an eco-label for agricultural products that are produced within the parks. Featured products are wines, cheese, meat, honey and preserves. The label ensures that the selected products are of high quality and produced in an environmentally sensitive manner. General criteria and guidelines at the regional level are adapted to more specific guidelines and commitments within each regional park. Consumer response has been strong because both the natural and cultural heritage of the parks is supported with each purchase.

This idea could be applied to state parks in the Midwest. Some state parks do, in fact, maintain special relationships with agriculture. For example, in south central Minnesota, Nerstrand-Big Woods State Park cooperates with the Big Woods Dairy. This dairy is run by the Broussard family, which leases park land and demonstrates sustainable agriculture (e.g., rotational grazing) to park visitors. This arrangement exemplifies the compatibility between the mission of state parks to protect natural ecosystems and the environmental benefits of sustainable agriculture. As the next step, the state park system could develop a wildlife or bird-friendly eco-label for products coming from farms near parks, scientific and natural areas, or wildlife management areas. Park scientists, naturalists and/or third- party conservation organizations could determine and evaluate criteria as well as certify sustainable agricultural systems. Products could be marketed in state park retail stores and nearby towns.

Contact: **Association pous la Promotion des Agriculteurs du Parc naturel regionel du Vercors (APAP)**
Naison du Parc
Chemin des Fusilles
38250 Lans en Vencors, France
Tel. (+33) 4 76 94 3830
Fax (+33) 4 76 94 3839
email: apap@pnr-vercors.fr

(Marketing Sustainable Agriculture: Case Studies and Analysis from Europe, Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy 1998; Minnesota DNR Web-site: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/parks_and_recreation/state_parks/nerstrand_…/bigwoods_dairy.html)

Example 7: Cooperative Forestry Initiatives

Wisconsin and Minnesota Many farms in the Midwest have forested areas or woodlots. And, in most cases, such holdings have multiple uses: timber and firewood; hunting and foraging; scenery, nature study, and other aesthetic value; places for solitude and exploration. Despite these and other intrinsic values, most owners remain reluctant to actively manage their wooded areas. Perhaps this reluctance is a result of not having enough time to spare or a lack of training beyond the field. Or, maybe it's too difficult to find or trust an outside contractor—someone who may not share your interests and values—to conduct logging, habitat management, or other work for you.

Whatever the reason, joining a sustainable forestry cooperative can provide you with the means to start managing your woodlands for multiple uses, including extra income. These cooperatives offer education and services in forest management, processing, and marketing for private, non-commercial landowners. Their overall mission is to maximize the long-term benefits—including those to wildlife—from area forests. The means to this end include following sustainable forestry practices, the education of landowners and consumers, and the local manufacturing of value-added certified wood products.

SMARTWOOD℠
PRACTICAL CONSERVATION THROUGH CERTIFIED FORESTRY

The **SmartWood** Program reduces the negative impacts of commercial forestry by awarding its seal of approval to responsible forest managers.

FSC

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, not-for-profit, membership organization that advances forest stewardship through certification of forest management practices and marketplace labeling of certified forest products.

Each co-op member has the opportunity to be involved in every step of the resource management process: from timber stand improvement and habitat restoration, to the manufacturing and marketing of the finished product. Before becoming a member, an owner must demonstrate a dedication to preserving or enhancing the ecological diversity and integrity of their land, as part of the certification process.

Gigi La Budde, an ecological consultant to the Sustainable Woods Cooperative (SWC) in Spring Green, Wisconsin, says that most members are indeed inspired by a wish to combine productive forestry with sound ecological guidelines. La Budde helps interested landowners view their land in the long-term and choose management practices toward desired goals. “Our Co-op has more to do with ‘input’: good science, common sense, love, regard for the future,” La Budde explains.

Sustainable Woods Cooperative
Spring Green, Wisconsin

In addition to receiving the quarterly newsletter, “Oak Openings,” members of SWC receive help from SWC's consulting resource professionals with: 1) forestry practices (e.g., timber stand improvement, harvest management and supervision); 2) ecological management practices (e.g., assessments and species inventories, habitat restoration, non-timber product development); 3) marketing practices (e.g., contracting manufacturers, finding markets for non-timber products, processing orders and sales);

and 4) educational practices (e.g., special field trips and field days, workshops and roundtables, training and certification).

For more information on community forestry initiatives, and contact information for co-ops and forestry organizations, visit the Community Forestry Resource Center's (CFRC) website at http://www.forestrycenter.org, or call (612) 870-3407. Initiatives that are developing and promoting forest owner cooperation in other Midwestern states include the White Earth Land Recovery Project and Headwaters SWC (MN), Hiawatha SWC and Wisconsin Family Foresters (WI), and Rural Action's Forestry Program (OH). Cooperative forestry initiatives exist in other regions across the U.S., from the west (Idaho, New Mexico and Washington) to the east (Alabama, Massachusetts, Maine, New York and Vermont).

Rural Action's Forestry Program is working with area landowners, agencies, small businesses and entrepreneurs to explore sustainable options for the development of wood products and non-timber forest products.

Contacts:

Sustainable Woods Cooperative
P.O. Box 430
Spring Green, WI 53588
Tel. (608) 583-7100
email: swc@mhtc.net

CFRC
c/o IATP
2105 1st Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Tel. (612) 870-3407
fax (612) 870-4846
Website: www.forestrycenter.org/

Rural Action
P.O. Box 157
Trimble, OH 45782
Tel. (740) 767-4938
email: colind@ruralaction.org
Website: www.ruralaction.org/forestry.html

WILDLIFE TOURISM

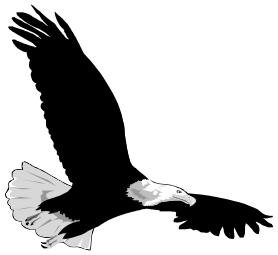
Goal: To generate income and raise awareness of landowner environmental stewardship by hosting on-farm tours.

"It's imperative that farmers take an active role in promoting the environmental benefits of farming," says Jim Kuhn, alfalfa and dairy producer in Southern California (Top Producer, 1997).

Wildlife tourism provides an opportunity for farmers and rancher to integrate their desire to communicate with the public about land stewardship and their need to generate income from their land. And, economic opportunities do exist. In the last thirteen years, a national survey shows that there has been a 155% increase in birdwatching participants. Another study, conducted by a Florida Tourism Research Office, shows that nationwide about 50% of American tourists now seek out nature-based activities, including wildlife and bird viewing, on their vacations. In Minnesota, birders spent $180 million dollars for food, lodging and transportation in 1991. These surveys show that landstewards can reach out to the burgeoning wildlife and birdwatching communities by promoting wildlife tourism.

To be successful, stewards must develop an understanding of what the land or community has to offer in terms of wildlife viewing opportunities. This may include conducting an informal inventory of wildlife present in their area. The Monitoring Tool Box, produced by the Land Stewardship Project, is one example of a tool that can be used to assess on-farm wildlife. Other examples are included in Appendix 1. Particular attention must be given to interesting or photogenic species such as bald eagles, trumpeter or tundra swans, waterfowl, migrant birds, coyotes, deer or other wildlife. While these may seem commonplace to someone who sees them often, they are the types of species that attract wildlife tourists. It is also important to think about the times of year that offer the best opportunities for viewing species and to organize tourism activities around these times. Another aspect to think about is the type of tourist that a farm could attract; avid birders, casual or amateur birders, photographers, big game enthusiasts, and botanists will probably want to see different things.

Farmers should find partners to help understand some of these issues and, ultimately, to help market their tourism enterprise. Potential partners include local wildlife organizations, tourism bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, local businesses, state natural resource agencies, and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service.



(Nature-Based Activities and the Florida Tourist. Visit Florida, 5/99; Birding/ birdwatching in Minnesota. Minnesota Ornithologist's Union Fact Sheet, 9/99)

On-Farm Tourism

On-farm tourism activities are activities or events that bring tourists to the farm. Farm families can provide lodging (i.e., bed and breakfasts, or B&B's) and host wildlife viewing tours, either on the farm or on nearby public and private lands. Value can be added to the experience by catering to the specific needs of targeted customers, such as by providing observation blinds, spotting scopes, and lists of local species. One B&B in Wheatley, Ontario, offers early morning breakfasts to accommodate birders' habit of waking up early. Another approach to B&B marketing is to draw attention to its proximity to nearby public lands that offer superior wildlife viewing experiences. Promotional material might include calendars or brochures that show the best times to view certain bird or wildlife species and highlight wildlife events, such as birding festivals, that may occur nearby. Brochures might also include a map of the surrounding area showing local wildlife viewing sites. Owners should consider developing agreements with restaurants and other businesses to offer discounts for farm guests. A list of these and other marketing strategies is provided in Appendix 2.

Example 1: Country Heritage Adventures

Minnesota Country Heritage Adventures is a pilot agri-tourism project started by the University of Minnesota Extension Service with local partners in the rural communities around Rochester, Minnesota. Participating landowners include grass-based dairy and cattle ranches, as well as corn and soybean farms, orchards and vegetable producers, that in some cases also offer wildlife viewing opportunities. Wildlife recreation opportunities include bottle-feeding deer, trout fishing, and visits to emu and llama farms. Tourists are also given the opportunity to learn about the benefits of rotational grazing.

Contact:

Country Heritage Adventures
P.O. Box 9203
Rochester, MN 55903-9203
Tel. 1 (800) 973-5277

Toni Smith
Extension Educator, University of Minnesota Extension Service
Wabasha County Extension Office
Tel. (651) 565-2662
email: tsmith@mes.umn.edu
Website: www.mnfarmtours.com

(Country Heritage Adventures Farm Tours brochure, undated; personal communication, Toni Smith, 11/99)

Example 2: Bison ranching - J&L Ranch

Minnesota On the J&L Ranch near Willmar, Minnesota, John and Leila Arndt practice rotational grazing with a herd of 150 bison. In 1998, they generated about $5,000 by hosting bison tours on their ranch. "We stressed the benefits of having bison on the land and the fact that bison meat is an excellent source of protein in our diets," the couple explained.

With a grant from the Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, they also planted a 15-acre plot of native grasses, which they plan to let the bison graze once it's established.

Background: The American bison is the largest land mammal in North America since the end of the Ice Age. Estimates of the pre-European herd size vary from 30,000,000 to 70,000,000 animals that ranged over most of North America. Legal protection of the bison in parks and preserves, along with individuals raising bison on their own land, have helped restore the bison to over 350,000 animals, most of which are privately owned (244,000 in U.S., 100,000 in Canada). The meat is used for food, the hide for leather, the wool is knitted into garments, and the skulls are used for decoration.

Advantages of raising bison: Bison are handled as little as possible, spending their lives on grass with very little time in the feedlot. They need not be subjected to certain drugs, chemicals or hormones. Meat from bison is a highly nutrient dense food because of the proportion of protein, fat, mineral, and fatty acids to its caloric value.

Specific benefits to wildlife from bison have seldom been documented, but several have been suggested (National Bison Association):

- Bison seem to be easier on riparian areas and do well on lower quality forage than beef. (On the flip side, bison fencing may reduce wildlife movement onto private lands—although several bison producers also have elk on their property.)
- Bison raising tends to return a better profit per animal; therefore (theoretically), fewer bison would be needed to return the same profit as from other livestock—leaving more forage for wildlife.
- Bison are very protective of their young; less predator control would be needed.
- Also, bison digging down through a thick snow layer to find grass could be beneficial to other grazers who cannot dig down that deep.

Contact:

John E. and Leila Arndt
J&L Bison Ranch
5650 41st Ave NW
Willmar, MN 56201
Tel. (320) 235-8465

Sam Albrecht, Executive Director
National Bison Association
email: info@nbabison.org
Website: www.nbabison.org/index.html
[publishers of *Bison World* magazine]

(Willmar couple uses grant money to grow grass for bison ranch. Carolyn Lange. Mississippi Monitor, 8/99, 3(8) [see www.amrivers.org/mm/missmonitor.html]; Sam Albrecht, May 11, 2000, and NBA website)

Example 3: Inn Serendipity, Bluff Creek Inn

Wisconsin Inn Serendipity is a bed and breakfast in Browntown, Wisconsin, that offers its guests vegetarian meals made from an organic garden. It also offers locally produced dairy and poultry products. Guests can view wildlife from within the farmhouse (binoculars, guidebooks, and bird lists provided), and have access to a nearby public recreational trail.

Minnesota The Bluff Creek Inn, a member of the Heritage Registry of the Friends of the Minnesota Valley, is a bed and breakfast in Chanhassen, Minnesota. The owners of this B&B, bordering the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, are exploring options for promoting wildlife viewing opportunities on the nearby refuge.

To bring in the birding tourists, a "Local Birding Team list" could be developed. This would be a contact list of local birders that would be willing to work with tourists, either by giving tips on birding spots or, for larger groups, by hosting guided tours. On-farm viewing opportunities could be emphasized.

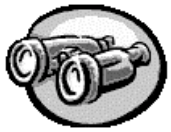
Contact:

Inn Serendipity
7843 County P
Browntown, WI 53522
Tel. (608) 329-7056
Fax. (608) 329-7057
email: InnSeren@aol.com
Web-Site: http://members.aol.com/innseren/public/innserendipity.html

Bluff Creek Inn
1161 Bluff Creek Dr.
Chanhassen, MN 55317
Tel. (952) 445-2735

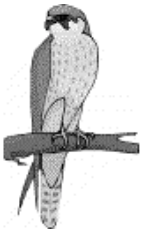
(source: the above website)

Birding Festivals



"When people go birding, they go to farms because that's where the best species are. Birders don't see the farmer behind the resource. Festivals may help birders understand agriculture's importance to bird life," says ornithologist Claude Edwards (Top Producer, 1997).

Hosting birding festivals is another way that income can be generated from farmers' wildlife management activities. To do this, landowners can form organizing committees, stewardship associations, or a non-profit organization, perhaps with conservation and business partners. Business partners may include local chambers of commerce, food establishments, and places for lodging including farmer-owned B&B's. Conservation partners may include the Minnesota Ornithologist's Union, American Birding Association, National Audubon Society, Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (for National Wildlife Refuges), and state departments of natural resources (for state parks or wildlife management areas).



Festivals may highlight rare species, as in the Trumpeter Swan Festival Week in the Comox Valley of British Colombia, Canada (see Example 7), or the Attwater's Prairie Chicken Festival in Eagle Lake, Texas (see Example 5). Festivals can have a variety of themes. A festival could be as basic as featuring one landscape feature, such as a privately owned lake or marsh; or, it could promote a region or network of publicly and privately owned wetlands (i.e., prairie pothole region). Or, perhaps it could feature flocks of migrating birds that visit farmland during a certain time of year.

The benefits to landowners of hosting such an event include not only the revenues generated from tourism, but also public recognition for good land stewardship and perhaps political support for on-farm conservation efforts that are not adequately rewarded by current public policy.

(For the birds: farm habitat brings tourist dollars to this California community. Top Producer. April, 1997. See: http://www.farmjournal.com/magazines/articles.cfm?issueID=105&ID=2&ACP=3)

Example 4: Minnesota birding trails

The **Pine to Prairie birding trail** is a proposed birding trail, from Warroad and Roseau in Northwest Minnesota, to Detroit Lakes and Fergus Falls in Central Minnesota. It is scheduled for completion—with trail and site maps—in spring 2000, and when completed will feature a total of 40 marked viewing areas on public lands within the national wildlife refuge and state park systems. The trail should offer exceptional birding opportunities since it lies in the transition zone of the three big ecosystems that meet in Minnesota: the boreal forest, the deciduous hardwood forest, and tallgrass prairie. As there are significant areas of agricultural production in the adjacent Red River Valley, landowners in these regions can participate in this process by organizing birding festivals in agricultural communities and private farms. Currently, there is one birding festival in the area, The Detroit Lakes Festival of Birds, which is held in mid-May.

The Gunflint Trail is another newly formed birding trail in Northeast Minnesota. The 63-mile trail features hardwood and boreal forest habitats where about 100 species of birds are found, including many warbler species and the black-backed woodpecker.

Other birding trails in development include trails in the Minnesota and Mississippi River Valleys. Local and state chapters of the National Audubon Society are developing these trails.

Website: www.gunflint-trail.com

(Beneke, Betsy. Pine to Prairie Birding Trail - Information Sheet. Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge, 9/99; Pine to Prairie birding trail to open in spring. Minnesota Birding, Sept.-Oct. 99; Audubon Council coordinating Great River Birding Trail. Minnesota Birding, Sept.-Oct. 99)

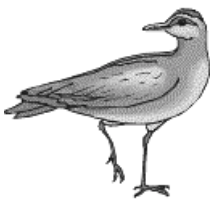
Example 5: Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail

Texans have the reputation of doing everything in a big way, and their efforts in nature tourism are no exception. The **Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail** is a 500-mile stretch of about 100 prime viewing locations where up to 600 bird species can be seen. Most of the sites are on public land, but many small towns and rural communities have organized birding festivals that feature local attractions. Community leaders in Eagle Lake, Texas, for example, hold the Eagle Lake Attwater's Prairie Chicken Festival to raise awareness and highlight bird-watching opportunities of this rare bird and others. As part of the festival, the community and the festival organizers recognize local landowners that contribute to the conservation of prairie chicken habitat.

(Texas Parks and Wildlife Website: http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

Example 6: Salton Sea International Bird Festival

California. Of course, most groups are not in a position to do anything as grand as the nature tourism efforts in Texas. California offers an example of a more community and farm-oriented festival. Organized by a local alfalfa and dairy producer in 1997, the **Salton Sea International Bird Festival** brought more than 1000 birding enthusiasts and generated an estimated $250,000 in tourist revenue to a California rural community. Local restaurants and places of lodging received cash from tourists in addition to revenue generated from a $45 registration fee. Activities included guided farm tours on two landscapes that attract hundreds of bird species—alfalfa fields and irrigation ponds. To organize the event, landowner Jim Kuhn worked with a nearby wildlife refuge and local businesses and promoted the event with photos he took himself. He invited organizations from both the birding and farm sector to display brochures on information booths.



(For the birds: Farm habitat brings tourist dollars to this California Community. Top Producer, April 1997. See: http://www.farmjournal.com/magazines/articles.cfm?issueID=105&ID=2&ACP=3)

Example 7: Trumpeter Swan Festival Week

British Columbia The Trumpeter Swan Sentinel Society, a local non-profit organization in British Columbia, Canada, sponsors another community birding event in the Comox Valley called the **Trumpeter Swan Festival Week.** Held the first weekend of February, the festival features about 2,000 trumpeter swans on primarily agricultural lands. Among other activities, tourists are invited to visit farms and learn how agricultural fields planted with winter cover crops can provide bird habitat. The festival creates a win-win situation for farmers and the birding community. The farmers, who were previously losing forage grasses to grazing swans, now receive a portion of the festival earnings to pay the cost of seed for the winter crop. Birders view wildlife in an agricultural landscape and learn about the stewardship practices of participating farmers. The festival's motto, "Think like a Swan…Eat Locally Grown Food," highlights the effort to boost sales of locally grown products.

Contact: **Trumpeter Swan Sentinel Society**
#3-2401 Cliffe Avenue, Box #169
Courtenay, BC V9N 2L5
CANADA
Tel. (250) 334-3234
Fax. (250) 338-5651
Website: www.vquest.com/swan/fest.html

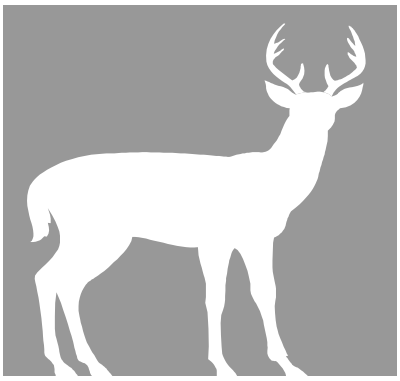
(Trumpeter Swans - Over 2000 Reasons to Celebrate. Trumpeter Swan Sentinel Society Press Release, 11/98; Trumpeter Swan Sentinel Society Website: www.vquest.com/swan/fest.html)

Many of the prime birding areas in the Midwest are on agricultural lands. In response to habitat degradation and depletion from agricultural activities, there are government programs that focus on restoring key birding and wildlife habitats within valued watersheds. For example, the federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), a program that is slated to restore up to 100,000 acres of riparian and wetland habitat along the Minnesota River, promises to enhance bird and other wildlife in the area.

Private initiatives include the Cannon River Watershed Partnership, a private non-profit that provides funds for habitat restoration along the Cannon River. A farmer in one of these areas can start by talking with neighbors, local conservation groups and government folks about the possibilities of sponsoring a community birding festival.

WILDLIFE RECREATION

Goal: To generate farm income by providing access to land for recreational uses by wildlife enthusiasts.



Farmers and ranchers have long provided free or for-fee access to their lands for local hunters and anglers under informal "gentleman's agreements." Hunting and other wildlife enthusiasts are willing to pay these fees because they provide exclusive access to the natural resources on private land. A recent national survey showed the following 1996 private land use fee statistics: hunters paid $324 million ($348 per hunter), anglers paid $84 million ($54 per angler), and birdwatching enthusiasts paid $106 million ($67 per birdwatcher). As a rough estimate, if five percent of the two million U.S. farmers participated in these recreational opportunities, each farm could gain approximately $5,000 of supplemental income.

Granted, the demand and market share for wildlife recreation will vary depending on the location of the farm. A number of factors have to be considered, such as: 1) proportion of public versus private land, 2) proximity to urban centers, 3) quality of wildlife recreation opportunity, 4) size of landholding, 5) proximity to other tourist destinations, and 6) ease of access. Small business programs within state Extension Services and wildlife or natural resource agencies may be available to help assess the demand and potential for on-farm wildlife recreation in an area.

Once the decision has been made to investigate wildlife recreation options, the next step—and in many cases, the key to success—is networking with wildlife and conservation organizations, with local businesses (e.g., food and lodging enterprises), and with the local chamber of commerce. Often wildlife organizations, such as Ducks Unlimited, will provide equipment and technical support to increase habitat for desired wildlife species. Many farmers have used these and other resources to integrate recreation income into their whole farm operations.

Example 1: Campbell Resources, Inc.

Illinois A family run business, Campbell Resources, Inc., offers hunts for trophy deer on a 7,000-acre farm in Pike County, Illinois. The Campbells' manage their land for wildlife by planting filter strips and food plots and by leaving corn in the fields after harvest. They offer a 10-day hunting package for $3000 that includes lodging accommodations on their farm. In a recent hunting season, they hosted 2 dozen hunters from Iowa, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

(Farming on the Wild Side. Progressive Farmer, 8/99)

Example 2: Triple W Farms

Kentucky. Triple W Farms provide deer and turkey hunts on a their farm of 2,000-acres, of which 1,200 are cropland and the rest wooded. Their wildlife-friendly management practices include rotational grazing, fencing to protect water resources, and plantings of legumes in wildlife corridors. Lodging is provided in a renovated farmhouse. They charge $125 per day for hunting and lodging.

(Stewardship Beefs Up Income. Progressive Farmer, 9/98)

Example 3: Hammack's hunting fee operation

Georgia. Dan Hammack, a family farmer in Edison, Georgia is primarily interested in managing his 400 acres of wooded land for wildlife. He uses hunting fees for deer, quail, and turkey to finance management practices. Within wooded areas, he intersperses three to five acre food plots planted to combinations of perennial, spring and winter cover crops that provide food and shelter for wildlife. Says Hammond, "I'm not much into guns or bows. I'm interested in wildlife conservation, increasing wildlife populations, and improving habitat."

(This Farmer Welcomes Deer. Farm Journal Today, 8/99)

In general, landowners in the Midwest have an advantage in that much of the natural and wooded areas in the region are privately owned. There are many examples of wildlife recreation opportunities in the form of day fees, lease hunting, and preserves. However, many landholdings in the Midwest are smaller than the ranches and farms profiled here. The owners of smaller holdings should think about cooperating with neighbors to offer wildlife recreation opportunities.

Based on landowner experiences, one should expect to break even or even lose some money in the initial years, because of the costs associated with getting a hunting preserve or bird sanctuary, for example, up and running. Potential problems may arise from the supervision and scheduling of a common area. Also, there is the potential for hunting and angler populations and/or interest to not increase rapidly enough to prevent market saturation.

FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Goal: To restore or enhance native prairie, wetlands or forests by seeking cost-sharing funding and technical support offered by private, non-profit organizations.

"Farmers were very enthusiastic. This was an opportunity for them to publicly demonstrate their interest in acting responsibly as stewards of the land," Lorna Ellestad, Ducks Unlimited Project Coordinator.

Non-profit, private organizations help restore or preserve significant tracks of land by providing cost-share and technical assistance. Many of these initiatives support or fund existing government conservation programs like CRP. However, some incentive programs are designed to independently address the conservation needs of a particular region. Others are designed to allow more flexibility in implementing conservation measures than is allowed by the government programs. We highlight three such programs below.

Example 1: Cannon River Watershed Partnership

Minnesota Based on landowner recommendations and a technical advisory committee, the Cannon River Watershed Partnership designed a program called the Cooperative Assistance Program. This program fills a void in government programs and provides cost-sharing and technical assistance for small to medium sized landowners (5-20 acres) interested in wildlife enhancement or nature conservation. The overall goal is to improve the water quality of the Cannon River watershed by promoting such conservation activities as vegetation buffer strips, rotational grazing, and forest stewardship plans. It is designed to be more flexible than government programs; for example, it allows limited grazing of buffer strips. From 1995-99, about 1000 acres of forest and prairie and 100 acres of wetlands were established. The Partnership is seeking funds to continue the cost-sharing programs and to initiate a citizen's monitoring program for river water quality.

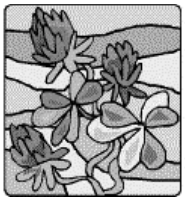
Contact: Cooperative Assistance Program
Cannon River Watershed Partnership
Allene Moesler
PO Box 501
Faribault, MN 55021
Tel. (501) 332-0488

(Cannon River Watershed Partnership's Cooperative Assistance Program. Cannon River Watershed Partnership, 11/95)

Example 2: Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust

British Columbia, Canada The Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust, a private non-profit organization in British Columbia, has designed Farm Stewardship Programs for farmers within the Lower Fraser River Delta. These programs offer cost-sharing and technical assistance for practices that create or improve wildlife habitat on farmland in the Delta—an area that has lost 70% of its historic wetlands to agriculture. Wildlife habitat conservation and farmland preservation are now of critical importance in the region because it is being threatened by urban sprawl from nearby Vancouver. The Trust's board of directors is composed of representatives from farming and wildlife or conservation organizations, as well as two at-large members.

A grassland set-aside program provides $300/acre for up to forty acres to offset costs of planting a native mix of prairie seeds on agricultural land. The native mix includes orchard grass, tall fescue, timothy, chewing's fescue, creeping red fescue and red clover. These grasslands provide beneficial habitat to small mammals, waterfowl, and birds of prey. Land can be set aside for one to five years. An average of 300 acres per year is set aside under this program. The program is appealing to producers that are considering converting their operation to organic because it provides a cost-effective way to increase soil fertility and leave the land chemical free for three years, a requirement for organic certification.



The fall cover crop "Green Fields" program provides $45/acre to plant six varieties of winter cereal crops that are beneficial to wildlife. These grains include spring barley, oats, spring wheat, fall rye, annual ryegrass and winter wheat and are usually preceded by a nurse crop. Of all the programs, this one is the most popular with an average of 3,000 acres enrolled every year. Additionally, the Trust offers Hedgerows and Grassed Field Margins programs that provide $300/acre to plant native trees and grasses, respectively.

Contact:

Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust
Sabine Neels
Farm Stewardship Programs

205-4882 Delta Street
Delta, B.C.
V4K 2T8
Phone/Fax (604) 940-3392

(The Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust. Melnychuk, David. Environmental Enhancement through Agriculture: Proceedings of a Conference, Boston, MA, 1995. ed. Lockeretz, William. 1996. Pp. 89-94; Personal communication, Sabine Neels, 11/99)

Example 3: Ducks Unlimited Initiatives

Washington State In addition to supporting and providing funding for government agency programs, Ducks Unlimited (DU) has initiated some independent programs that restore and enhance waterfowl habitat in specific regions. One such program, called "Barley for Birds," was initiated in 1993 in the Skagit Valley of Washington State. Waterfowl habitat in this area had been severely depleted as farmers switched from grain crops to vegetable cash crops—leaving little residue for migrating birds. In addition, the conversion led to increased soil erosion and nitrogen runoff and thus, poorer water quality. Barley for Birds provides money and technical assistance in the planting of a special fall cover crop, Poco barley. The program benefits farmers, wildlife and the surrounding environment by providing food for migrating waterfowl, reducing nitrate runoff, improving water quality, and increasing nitrogen retention.

Now in its seventh year, the program participants include 16 farmers that have planted 1200 acres with winter grains. In addition to barley, they can now plant winter wheat and rye. These grains are less expensive and work better for some rotations because they can be planted later in the season. Local wildlife experts have estimated that up to 60,000 waterfowl visit the larger 50-acre plots.

The "Barley for Birds" program works because flexibility is built into the program and farmers are consulted throughout the process. The addition of the new grain crops is a good example of this flexibility. The program is popular with farmers because it allows them to act in order to bring back the waterfowl they knew as children.

The program has also allowed DU and other partners to start communications with farmers about other conservation issues. In order to pre-empt future regulatory actions against the farmers for the destruction of crucial endangered salmon habitat, DU and a local county conservation agency are acting together. They are planning to offer an incentive program for the planting of winter cover crops (DU) and riparian buffers (county) along the streams and rivers where salmon occur, and to organize an eco-tourism event that will highlight the farmer's stewardship efforts. Skagit Valley already hosts a tulip festival that draws in close to one million tourists annually; therefore, the salmon habitat organizers are proceeding with caution. DU and co-organizer Mike Davison, regional biologist for the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, want to ensure that the proper funding and infrastructure are in place before the tourists are invited onto the farms.

Part 2. Private Sector Stewardship Incentive Programs

California Another DU project, called Valley Care, seeks to restore wildlife in the California Central Valley, an area that has lost a majority of its wetlands. The program provides participating landowners with cost-share funding and technical assistance for the winter flooding of rice fields as a method to provide waterfowl and shorebird habitat for wintering birds. Benefits to the landowner included the decomposition and recycling of nutrients from straw waste, and control of weeds and disease. In the first five years of the project, as much as 200,000 acres of rice fields were flooded on an annual basis. An additional 58,000 acres of wetland have been restored or enhanced. The name of the program has recently been changed to Valley/Bay Care to reflect efforts to restore marshland and stream/creek habitats in the Suisan Marsh and San Pablo Bay.

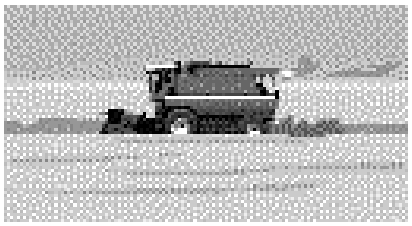
Contact: Lorna Ellestad
"Barley for Birds" Project
14169 Avon Allen Road
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
Tel. (360) 424-4155
Fax. (360) 424-3241
email: ellestad@cnw.com

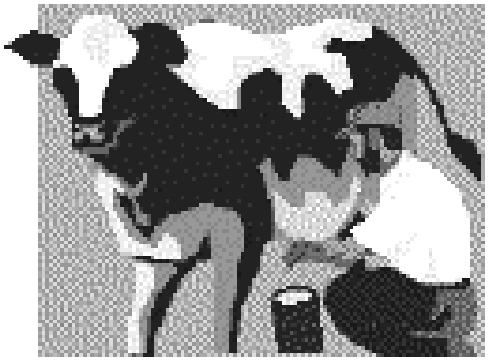
(Barley for Birds. Ducks Unlimited. In http://www.ducks.org/whatwedo/barley2.html; Personal Communication, Lorna Ellestad, 12/99; Valley Care: Bringing Conservation and Agriculture Together in California's Central Valley. Persoe, Jack M., Michael A. Bias and Richard G. Kempka. Environmental Enhancement through Agriculture: Proceeding of a Conference, Boston, MA, 1995)

These programs could be used as models of incentive programs in the Midwest designed to provide fall and winter habitat for migrating birds in the Central Flyway. Incentives could come from private sector cost-sharing and technical assistance programs like the Ducks Unlimited examples. Alternatively, they could be publicly funded property tax reductions, or could be tied together with local birding festivals or other wildlife events.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION AND REGISTRY PROGRAMS

Programs that draw public recognition to on-farm environmental stewardship offer another way to support family farms. In this case the "support" is not direct economic support, but rather the good will of the local community and the general public. Many of these programs highlight how the farm benefits wildlife. The truth is that there is more environmental stewardship occurring on private lands in the Midwest, especially on family farms, than the public or media know. Like some of the other strategies described above, these programs can help distinguish family farm operations from corporate ones. They can also help begin a public dialogue within the environmental, wildlife, and nature conservation communities about the importance of the family farm to the quality of our environment.





Example 1: River-Friendly Farmer

Minnesota The River-Friendly Farmer is a public recognition program sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance for Conservation and Resource Management, a collaboration of government agencies, agricultural organizations and private firms. Farmers, who meet the ten established standards or criteria, receive local recognition, a certificate from the Governor, and a River-Friendly Farmer sign to post on their farm. The program aims to provide public recognition of Minnesota farmers whose nutrient, pesticide, and manure management practices help improve water quality. Featured management practices include conservation tillage, livestock feedlots that minimize runoff, reduced pesticide applications, direct application of fertilizer into the soil, and others. To date, over three hundred farmers are participating in the program.

"The program shows that farmers do care about our rivers and are working to make them cleaner," said Brad Sasse, a River-Friendly Farmer in Le Sueur County (River- Friendly Farmer Update). Similar programs have been established in Indiana and Nova Scotia, Canada.

Bird-Friendly Farmer: a set of criteria to distinguish Midwestern farms and ranches as bird-friendly could be developed. Appropriate practices might include rotational grazing, wetland restoration, prairie restoration, sustainable forestry, food plots, and riparian buffers, among others.

Contacts:

Tim Wager
University of Minnesota Extension Service
SE District Office
863 30th Ave SE
Rochester, MN 55904-4915
Phone (507) 280-2866
Fax (507) 280-2872
email: twagar@extension.umn.edu

Robin Zucollo
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
375 Jackson St.
St. Paul, MN 55101-1854
Phone (651) 602-7866
Fax (651) 602-7914
email: rsz@mn.nrcs.usda.gov

(River-Friendly Farmer Update. Also: The River-Friendly Farmer Program. Minnesota Alliance for Conservation and Resource Management publications. http://www.extension.umn.edu/specializations/environment/HD1002.html)

Example 2: The Nature Conservancy

Minnesota The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has developed a Registry Program to recognize citizens and landowners that are committed to the conservation of the natural resources on their land. Often, the awards are awarded to landowners that voluntarily protect the habitat of rare or endangered species and may, at a later date, sell or donate their land to TNC. Participants of the registry program receive a plaque in recognition of their stewardship efforts.

The 219 acre Bal-Bur farm, which lies adjacent to the Weaver Dunes Preserve near Kellogg, Minnesota, recently received a plaque for its commitment to conserve remnants of sand prairie. The sand prairie ecosystem provides nesting habitat for the threatened *Blanding's turtle*.

By entering the registry program in 1989, Bob and Emily Nesvold of Rice county, Minnesota have pledged to conserve 50 wooded acres on their property. This wooded property contains one of the last remnants of the Big Woods ecosystem, a forest of maples, basswood, elms and oaks that once covered much of Minnesota. Among other species, this ecosystem provides habitat for the rare *Dwarf Trout Lily*, which is on the state's endangered species list.

Web-Site: www.tnc.org [>>site index>>state programs>>Minnesota]

(Allmann, Laurie. Land Protection Options: A Handbook for Minnesota Landowners. The Nature Conservancy, 1996.)

Example 3: Minnesota Valley Heritage Registry Program

Sponsored by the Friends of Minnesota Valley, a private non-profit organization dedicated to habitat conservation within the Minnesota River Valley, this program creates an "honor roll" of landowners whose land use practices benefit wildlife and nature. A private landowner near Chanhassen, for example, registered 10 acres of sensitive wetland near protected Seminary Fen, a rare calcareous wetland. As of early 2000, 167 landowners had registered their holdings with the program. This is one of the many tools/ideas that conservation organizations and the US Fish and Wildlife Service could implement at many National Wildlife Refuges around the country.

Contact: **Minnesota Valley Heritage Registry**, Registry Coordinator
Friends of the Minnesota Valley
3815 East 80th Street
Bloomington, MN 55425
Tel. 612 858-0706 (director's office)
email: fmv12@hotmail.com

Example 4: Wildlife Stewardship Farm Awards

The Rural Sportsman section of *Progressive Farmer* magazine has a Wildlife Stewardship Farm Awards Program that recognizes the importance of private landowners to the future of hunting and fishing. Each year, the magazine gives the award to one farming operation in each of four categories: Upland Game, Big Game, Farm Pond/Stream, and Waterfowl. Each winner receives a plaque, a farm sign, and an expenses-paid trip for two to Birmingham, Alabama, for the awards presentation. The winning farms will also be featured in an article appearing in the magazine, which makes sure word gets out to the winners' local media, allowing others to learn from their examples.

Eligible entrants are those actually responsible for planning and implementing the management practices, whether or not that person is the landowner. Any farm or ranch in the U.S. that allows hunting or fishing by the public, either commercially or non-commercially, is eligible to enter. Farm size is not a principle factor in judging, as winning farms have ranged from 80 cares to as large as 56,000.

Evaluations are based on: 1) how intensively the property is managed, 2) the percentage of the property that management influences, 3) the degree to which the management practices have improved the habitat for wildlife, 4) the long-term benefits of the management program, and 5) evidence that the land or water is being made accessible to the public on a scale appropriate to its size. A panel of wildlife management professionals reviews entries, the finalists are selected, and a representative from the magazine visits the farms before the winners are announced. Contact J. Wayne Fears of Rural Sportsman for more information or to obtain an entry form.

Contacts:

Progressive Farmer, Rural Sportsman
2100 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35209
Phone: (205) 877-6000
Fax: (205) 877-6860

J. Wayne Fears
Rural Sportsman Editor
E-mail: jwfears@ruralsportsman.com

(Information taken from a 2000 Official Entry Form and Progressive Farmer/Rural Sportsman website, http://progressivefarmer.com/ruralsportsman/viewhollow/default.asp.)

TAX INCENTIVES

Goal: To seek tax credits or incentives that reward good land stewardship and conservation efforts.

Local, state and federal governments are beginning to recognize that one of the best ways to encourage wildlife enhancement and conservation on private lands is to offer tax incentives or credits. Tax incentives are offered for a wide range of land uses including agriculture, forestry, wildlife management, scenery, and green space. Sometimes, the incentives require that the landowner complete a management plan.

Although the result of these programs is to reduce the tax burden, the way in which this benefit is derived can vary. Some programs are designed to give a property tax credit in the form of a reimbursement voucher, where the owner receives a partial refund with the voucher once the land use and the management plans have been approved.

Other programs actually reduce property taxes based on a differential assessment of the land value. In these programs, local officials assess the value of a piece of land based on its "agricultural use value" (or conservation use value) rather than its "fair market value." The fair market value can often be higher than the agricultural use value, especially when the area is under pressure from development.

Still other programs offer tax reductions in property taxes or estate taxes when the land is donated to a conservation organization or placed under a conservation easement.

As a final note, some of these programs are transitory or the details change over time. Some come and go based on available funding, current watershed or wildlife initiatives, and government priorities. Relatively speaking, tax law is frequently modified.

(Agricultural Tax Programs. Saving American Farmland: What Works. American Farmland Trust, 1997)

Wisconsin Regional Programs

Example 1: Conservation Credit Initiative

Pepin County Farmers helped design the Conservation Credit Initiative, a tax credit program offered by the River Country Resource Conservation and Development Area in three prioritized watersheds of Pepin County, Wisconsin. Farmers, who complete and carry out approved soil conservation and nutrient management plans, receive a tax credit that they can use to reduce their property taxes the following year. Conservation practices include buffer strips, contour farming and grade stabilizing. About 10,000 acres have been enrolled. Credits are received in the form of vouchers that the landowner can exchange at the end of the year. The credit rate is $6/acre.

The key distinction of this program is that it rewards and promotes good land stewardship practices *before* an environmental problem occurs on the farm. Some characteristics of this initiative include: 1) voluntary participation; 2) positive efforts rewarded; 3) annual renewal; 4) locally administered at low cost; 5) simple, flexible and adaptable; 6) local, state, and federal partnerships involved; 7) blended with existing programs.

The program has resulted in higher participation among landowners and decreased soil/wind erosion. Also, when compared to traditional soil conservation programs, it has led to a higher retention of conservation practices by landowners. Originally funded by a unique mix of county, state and federal dollars, it is currently being restructured into the Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) offered by USDA (Farm Service Agency and the NRCS).

Contact: Pepin County
Rod Webb
River County Resource Conservation and Development Area
Tel. (715) 672-8665

(Conservation Credit Initiative brochure. River Country Resource Conservation and Development Area, Eau Claire, WI. Undated; Also see the RC&D in Wisconsin website at http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/rcd.html)

Example 2: Pollution Reduction Incentive Program

St. Croix and Dunn Counties Offered through county Land Conservation Departments within the South Fork/Hay River watershed in Wisconsin, this program also offers tax credits for approved conservation practices. Originally designed by the Citizen Advisory Committee—a committee composed of farmers, a banker, and a university agricultural extensionist—this tax credit program was initiated in July of 1998. To qualify for the program, farmers must first maintain soil loss levels at or below the tolerable ("T") level. All streams must be protected with buffer strips. Once they complete soil, conservation and nutrient management plans, they can receive a $6-8 tax credit per acre (depending on the erodibility rating of their land) that can be used to reduce property taxes. Farmers that complete stream corridor management can obtain additional credits of $2/acre. Land use practices pertinent to wildlife include riparian buffer strips, no-till management, contour farming, rotational grazing, grassed waterways, and cropland protection cover. In 1999, 80 landowners and 30% of the cropland in the watershed were enrolled in the program.

Contact:

Mike Kinney
Dunn County
Land Conservation Dept.
Ag. Center, Suite C
390 Red Cedar St.
Menomonie, WI 54751
Tel. (715) 232-5983

Kyle Kulow
St. Croix County
Land Conservation Dept.
Ag. Center, Box 95/1960 8th Ave.
Baldwin, WI 54002
Tel. (715) 684-2874, Ext. 132; FAX-2666
email: kylek@co.saint-croix..wi.us

(The Pollution Reduction Incentive Program brochure. South Fork Hay River Watershed Project; Pollution Reduction Incentive Program: A Runoff Management Plan for the South Fork of the Hay River Priority Watershed Project, Final Draft. Wisconsin Runoff Management Program, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 10/97)

Local stakeholders working with local governments can help design programs that specifically target wildlife-friendly practices. As a requirement for the tax benefit, the landowner could be required to complete a habitat or wildlife management plan. Where endangered or rare species exist, programs could be designed to offer tax benefits for landowners that voluntarily create, maintain, or enhance habitat for those species.

Minnesota State Programs

Example 1: Native Prairie Bank Tax Exemption Program

Approved native prairie lands of at least five acres can be exempted from property taxes under this program. The landowner may hay, but not graze, this land after entering the program. For applications and more information about the program, contact the county assessor's office or the Department of Natural Resources Area Wildlife Manager in your area.

(Allman, Laurie. Land Protection Options: A Handbook for Minnesota Landowners. The Nature Conservancy, 1996; http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/omb/financial_assistance/mn_native.html)

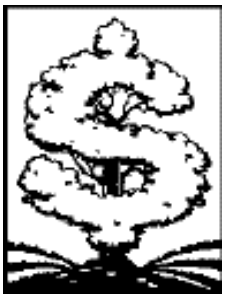
Example 2: Wetland Tax Exemption Program

Similar to the above program, this program exempts approved wetland sites from property taxes as long as the enrolled property meets the criteria of the program. Contact your local county assessor for applications.

(Allman, Laurie. Land Protection Options: A Handbook for Minnesota Landowners. The Nature Conservancy, 1996; http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/omb/financial_assistance/wetland_tax.html)

Example 3: Tree Growth Tax Law Program

This is a differential assessment program, where land is assessed based on the value of the average annual timber growth of the land, rather than the value of the property. The program is available in a limited number of Minnesota counties, including Becker, Carlton, Cass, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Koochiching, Morrison, St. Louis, and Wadena. For more information, contact your local Department of Natural Resources Forester, your county assessor, or Tom Kroll at MN DNR.



Contact: Tom Kroll, Private Forest Program Coordinator, DNR Forestry
500 Layfayette Road, Box 44
St. Paul, MN 55155
Tel. (651) 296-5970
Fax (651) 296-5954
email: tom.kroll@dnr.state.mn.us

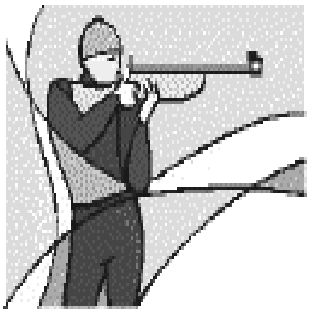
(Allman, Laurie. Land Protection Options: A Handbook for Minnesota Landowners. The Nature Conservancy, 1996; http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/omb/financial_assistance/tgtl.html)

Texas State Programs

Example 1: Agricultural Property Tax Conversion for Wildlife Management

Voted into law and the State of Texas Constitution in 1995, this differential assessment program allows land to be assessed based on approved wildlife management practices. Management practices are assessed by the county appraisal districts, which receive guidelines from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The landowner must implement three of the following seven wildlife management activities: habitat control, erosion control, predator control, supplemental supplies of water, supplemental supplies of food, shelters, and census counts to determine populations. It is suggested, but not required that the landowner complete a wildlife and habitat management plan. The law also requires that the landowner enhance wildlife populations for human use including recreation. Recreational uses include bird watching, hiking, hunting, and photography.

(Guidelines for Qualification of Agricultural Land in Wildlife Management. Texas Private Lands & Habitat Enhancement, in Texas Parks and Wildlife Website: http://www.twpd.state.tx.us/conserve/agland/aglandguide.html)



TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) PROGRAMS

Transfer of development rights (TDR) programs create a "market" for the development rights of your farmland or environmentally sensitive land. They designate areas where land protection is desired, called "sending" areas, and areas where high-density growth can be absorbed, called "receiving" areas. If you own land within the "sending" area, you are given development credits that you can sell to interested developers. In exchange for selling your development credit, you agree to not develop or subdivide your land. In some cases, the landowner may be required to sign conservation easement agreements. Developers that purchase the credits are granted permits to develop land within the "receiving" areas. If designed correctly, TDR programs can offer significant incentives for protecting and preserving farmland.

Many counties throughout the United States have experimented with transfer of development rights programs. The degree of success has varied. Montgomery County, Maryland, for example, has permanently protected 43,000 acres of farmland through TDR programs. Palm Beach County in Florida and Central Pine Barrens, Long Island, New York, have protected a limited amount of land that is environmentally sensitive. However, other county programs have not been successful because landowners and/or developers have not been provided with enough incentive to participate. If, for example, there are many farmers who want to sell their development credits, but few developers that wish to purchase credits, the value of the credit will be low. So, county governments have to work hard to balance the supply and demand of development credits. They need to ensure that the area of land in the "receiving" areas matches the area of land in the "sending" areas. Ideally, TDR programs should be part of a comprehensive zoning, urban development, and conservation plan that include a vision of where urban development should occur and which agricultural and natural areas should be preserved.

(Transfer of Development Rights. Saving American Farmland: What Works. American Farmland Trust. 1997; Maryland Example. Saving American Farmland: What Works. American Farmland Trust. 1997)

Example 1: New Jersey Pinelands

Through a TDR program developed in the early 1980's, 12,000 acres have been permanently protected for agricultural and low-impact forestry uses in the New Jersey Pinelands. Dual legislation passed by the U.S. Congress in 1978 and the New Jersey Legislature in 1979 (Pinelands Protection Act) got the process started by designating a Pinelands National Reserve. A comprehensive management plan designated the following land uses for the 1.1 million acre area: Preservation Area District (295,000 acres), Forest Area (400,000), Agricultural Production Area (66,200 acres), Regional Growth Areas (80,000 acres) and Rural Development Areas (132,000 acres). Preservation, Forest and Agricultural Areas were designated as "sending" areas, while Regional Growth and Rural Development Areas were designated as "receiving" areas. The TDR program uses Pineland Development Credits to transfer the development rights of land from the "sending" areas to land within the "receiving" areas. By purchasing these credits, developers are allowed to build at increased densities within the Regional Growth Areas (1 to 3.5 housing units per acre) and the Rural Development Areas (3 units per 10 acres).

(Pinelands Preservation Alliance Website: http://www.pinelandsalliance.org/cmp.html)

Example 2: Central Pine Barrens, NY

Under the Pine Barrens Credit Program, a TDR program created in the Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan of 1995, the development rights of 263 acres in a 52,000-acre preservation area have been transferred to land parcels within a 47,500-acre compatible growth area. The TDR program is part of a larger effort, authorized by the Long Island Pine Barrens Protection Act of 1993, to protect the ecological and hydrological resources of the Pine Barrens ecosystem in a 100,000-acre area. The legislation has created an office (the Pine Barrens Credit Clearinghouse) to administer the sale and transfer of land under the TDR program. Interested landowners must complete three steps through the Clearinghouse: 1) Obtain a Letter of Interpretation, which designates the number of Pine Barren Credits allotted to a parcel of land; 2) Apply for a Pine Barrens Credit Certificate, a document that allows for the sale and transfer of land; and 3) Submit a copy of the recorded conservation easement. Landowners that sell their Pine Barrens Credits must enter into a conservation easement with a public agency or a qualified non-profit organization.

(Pine Barrens Credit Program Handbook: A User's Guide to the Central Pine Barrens Transferable Development Rights Program. Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission. In http://pb.state.ny.us/pbc_handbook.html; SWCA Environmental Consultants Website: http://scwa.com/links_pine01.html)

These case studies can be used as models to lobby for TDR programs in your area. The goal of these programs could be to protect farmland and natural areas under development pressure, especially areas surrounding currently existing National Wildlife Refuges, National Parks, State Parks, and Wildlife Management Areas close to metro areas.

STATE WALK-IN HUNTER PROGRAMS

Several Midwestern and Plains states have walk-in hunter programs wherein landowners are paid for allowing hunters to hunt their land on a walk-in basis without any formal permission requirement. State wildlife agencies administer these programs, a process that includes negotiating the payments and signing area boundaries. Landowners receive compensation not only for their time and effort in management but also for the impacts of hunters. States in the region with existing programs include North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Montana. (Many states have other programs that provide cost-sharing and/or direct payments for wildlife enhancement efforts in exchange for allowance of "reasonable" access to the public.)

Common goals of walk-in programs are to: 1) conserve habitats for fish and wildlife, 2) provide landowners with financial assistance for developing and protecting wildlife habitat, and 3) provide the public with opportunities to access fish and wildlife on private land.

Besides direct payments, landowners can realize these other incentives:

- Limited liability assurances. Compared to someone enrolled in a walk-in program, landowners that charge a fee or lease land to hunters, or have an outfitting or trophy hunting operation, dramatically increase their liability. Although fee-based operations can supply owners with more money per acreage, owner liability under walk-in programs stays at the lowest level. Thus, program participants avoid the increased insurance costs and safety issues that owners of fee-based operations must handle.
- Another advantage of walk-in programs is the potential benefit of reduced game damage (e.g., damage to haystacks and crops caused by deer). Whereas fee-based operations promote the taking of trophy animals, walk-in programs promote the taking of non-trophy animals, which may prevent excessive damage from game.
- Conservation Officers monitor enrolled lands. This additional law enforcement presence can help prevent poaching and other problems.
- Landowners enrolled in walk-in programs may be given a high priority for further wildlife habitat incentives and technical assistance offered by the state.

These programs have several characteristics in common. Typically, to establish the terms of agreement, first a site assessment by state personnel is conducted prior to enrollment. Then, the compensation level, restrictions the owner wants in place, and the type of contract are agreed upon. The hunting access contract, typically negotiated annually in the spring and summer, can be multi-year or single year. The payments vary depending on size, location, and quality of the tract; there may be maximum yearly payments. The state will supply signs, border markers, and other materials to designate plots as public access areas. Signs on site give further information to hunters; some signify hunting is allowed, while other signs denote areas closed to hunting or motorized travel. Priority for enrollment is given to larger areas; sometimes

there are minimum acreage requirements. In some cases, land can or must already be enrolled in a conservation program such as CRP. Participants usually must agree to limit grazing, haying, and other vegetative control on the plot. The targeted wildlife depends on the program and habitat, and may include waterfowl and fish.

If your state does not offer this type of program, there probably is no reason why a county or local government couldn't develop some similar program—perhaps sportsman's groups could help sponsor. (State regulations may well determine exactly what rights or restrictions may apply to private landowners "use" of the public wildlife resource.) Talk to county and state officials, neighbors, and sportsman's groups active in your area to determine interest and potential restrictions. Consider other options such as fishing opportunities.

North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Private Lands Initiative (PLI) administers the Conservation Private Lands Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) program. The State pays landowners for providing public access and reimburses them for new or existing habitat (including woodlands and CRP lands) and unharvested crops as food plots.

Contact: Greg Link, Private Lands Program Coordinator, (701) 328-6331, glink@state.nd.us
Website: http://www.state.nd.us/gnf/hunting.html

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department, as part of its Private Lands Program, has a General Hunting Access/ Walk-In Areas (WIAs) program. Program options include: Season-Long walk-in hunting access (full payments); Delayed opening access, (payments reduced); and CRP seeding cost-sharing.

Contact: Bill Smith, SD GFP, (605) 773-3096, Bill.Smith@state.sd.us
Website: http://www.state.sd.us/gfp/privatelands/

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has a program with landowners called Block Management. The FWP pays the landowner up to $10 per hunter-day. The owner keeps track of hunter-days with a permission slip booklet that acts as a receipt, a copy of which goes to the hunter, landowner, and the state.

Contact: Alan Charles, Program Coordinator, (406) 444-3798, acharles@state.mt.us
Website: http://fwp.state.mt.us/hunting/blockman/index.html

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has Walk-In Hunter Access (WIHA) and Fishing Impoundment and Stream Habitat (FISH) programs.

Contact: Steve Sorensen, (316) 683-8069, steves@wp.state.ks.us
Website: WIHA http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/hunting/WIHA_Atlas/WIHA_Atlas.html
FISH http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/fishing/FISH2000/fish2000.html

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, in partnership with other agencies and private foundations, administers the Conservation Reserve Program - Management Access Program (CRP-MAP), geared toward improving habitat on CRP for pheasant and other wildlife. Non-CRP areas with good quality wildlife habitat may also be eligible.

Contact: Mark Humpert, NE GPC, District VI, (308) 865-308, mhumpert@ngpc.state.ne.us
Website: http://bighorn.ngpc.state.ne.us/wildnebraska/crp-map.htm

Other **cost-share programs** available in NE: http://ngp.ngpc.state.ne.us/wildlife/rwbjv/Program.htm

NEXT STEPS

Financial and public recognition opportunities do exist for wildlife enhancement on farmland. Farmers have created many of these opportunities themselves, with help from public agencies and private organizations. Here's what farmers have said about private incentives for wildlife enhancement:

- Chance to communicate with the public and media about the environmental stewardship of family farms.
- Offer the potential to avoid or preempt future government regulation and mitigation by rewarding good land stewardship.
- Can be an opportunity to address local wildlife issues/problems with more flexible, adaptable and farmer-friendly solutions.
- Present the possibility to create a closer link with consumers who are concerned about wildlife.
- One should proceed with caution: seek help and forge partnerships with wildlife managers, conservation organizations, marketing experts, business community.

Now, the reader needs to determine which of the incentive strategies outlined here best fit the context of interest. Some incentives can be pursued by individual landowners. Others require a group effort and may require collaboration with politicians to effect the appropriate laws.

There are tools like the Monitoring Tool Box of the Land Stewardship Project (see Appendix 1) that can help landowners assess the state of natural resources and wildlife on their holdings. It's important to have a good understanding of the status and potential of a property, along with recognition of problems. These will be helpful in developing realistic goals—a vision of a desired future. Some strategies go hand in hand, with one naturally following another. Here are some general approaches with potential:

- Use local/state/federal conservation incentive programs to jump-start private initiatives (example: Develop community birding festivals on CREP or CRP lands).
- "Food with a Face": Use wildlife enhancement and wildlife criteria for labeling to distinguish products in the market place. Wildlife criteria can be used as an alternative to or addition to organic certification. Or, market farm products on the basis of more general environmental protection and natural resource conservation criteria such as: rotational grazing, riparian buffers, other conservation practices

(BMPs—best management practices), Integrated Pest Management, Whole Farm Planning.

- Help develop a cost-sharing/tax credit program of fall/winter cover crops or field flooding for migrating birds in the Central Flyway. Follow up by sponsoring an eco-tourism event.

- Participate in, promote, or help develop a public recognition, registry, or financial incentive program that rewards stewardship. For example, create a bird-friendly farmer registry program, or an eco-label, for farms that practice wildlife enhancement around public recreation, wildlife, and natural areas.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Clark, Jeanne, and Glenn Rollins. 1997. Farming for Wildlife: voluntary practices for attracting wildlife to your farm. (California, multiple agencies and organizations). 41 pp.

Close to the Ground: A Team Approach to On-farm Monitoring. *VIDEO*. Land Stewardship Project, 1997.

Co-operative Approaches to Sustainable Agriculture. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. 1988.

Edwards, Victoria M. Dealing in Diversity: America's Market for Nature Conservation, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Environmental Enhancement Through Agriculture. Proceedings of a Conference. Boston, MA. November 15-17, 1995.

Financial Assistance Directory: 1999-2001. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. June, 1999.

Land Protection Options: A Handbook for Minnesota Landowners. The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Trust for Public Land, & Minnesota Land Trust, 1996.

Managing Your Land For Wildlife: Opportunities for Farmers and Rural Landowners. University of Minnesota Extension Service. 1998.

Marketing Sustainable Agriculture: Case Studies and Analysis from Europe. Edited by the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy. 1999.

Minnesota's Natural Resource Conservation Programs: Cost-share, Land Retirement, Land Donation, and Special Property Tax Programs. University of Minnesota Extension, June, 1992.

The Monitoring Toolbox. Land Stewardship Project. 1998.

National Stewardship Incentives: Conservation Strategies for U.S. Landowners. Defenders of Wildlife. 1998.

Natural Resources Income Opportunities for Private Lands. Proceedings of a Conference, Hagerstown, Maryland: April 5-7, 1998. University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service.

Saving American Farmland: What Works. American Farmland Trust. 1997.

Appendix 1. Whole-Farm Monitoring and Assessment Tools

NAME	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA	CONTACT INFO
Monitoring Tool Box	Land Stewardship Project	provides family farms and other rural landowners with tool to monitor the impact of management decisions on the land, family, and finances.	• quality of life • farm sustainability • birds • frogs • soils • streams • pesticides • pasture vegetation	Caroline van Schaik Project Coordinator Land Stewardship Project 2200 4th Street White Bear Lake, MN 55110 Tel. (651) 653-0618 Fax. (651) 653-0589 lspwbl@landstewardshipproject.org
Farm*A*Syst	• National Farm*A*Syst Office • State Farm*A*Syst Office • Private Partners	voluntary program which helps farmers and rural residents protect groundwater by reducing pollution risks in property	• well condition • pesticide/fertilizer storage/handling • petroleum tanks • hazardous waste • household water waste • livestock yards • silage • milking waste water	Gary Jackson Director/CSREES Coordinator National Farm Assist B142 Steenbock Library 550 Babcock Drive Madison, WI 53706-1293 gwjackso@facstaff.wisc.edu http://www.wisc.edu/farmasyst/index.html
Ontario Environmental Farm Plan*	Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition	• use scoring system to develop an action plan for operating the farm in a way that is more environmentally responsible • adapted from Farm*A*Syst	• soils • water wells • pesticides • fertilizer • farm wastes • agricultural wastes • livestock yards • silage storage • water efficiency • energy efficiency • stream management • wetlands, ponds • woodlands, wildlife	Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition c/o Ontario Federation of Agriculture 491 Eglinton Ave. W., Suite 500 Toronto, Ont. M5N 3A2 Canada Tel. (416) 485-3333

Appendix 1. Whole-Farm Monitoring and Assessment Tools

NAME	ORGANIZATION	DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA	CONTACT INFO
Environmental Farmstead Evaluation	Dairy Network Partnership	• use to measure the environmental management of dairy farms • provides farms with high scores a premium of products sold with an eco-label • provides farms with lower scores cost-sharing for management improvements • adapted from Farm*A*Syst for Pennslyvania Dairy Farms	• barnyard management • stream/drainageway mgmt. • pesticide storage/handling • milkhouse waste • home sewage system • well condition/construction	Dairy Network Partnership 611 Siegfriedale Rd. Kutztown, PA 19530 Tel. (610) 683-1476 Fax. (610) 683-8548
Nutrient Management Yardstick	Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy	• bookkeeping tool to measure the flows of nutrients (Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Potassium) through farms • adapted from the Nutrient Management Yardstick developed by the Centre for Agriculture and Environment, the Netherlands	• feed inputs • livestock inputs • fertilizer/manure inputs • N-fixing plants • N in irrigation water • exported products • N gas loss • N runoff • N leaching	Mark Muller Senior Associate IATP 2105 First Ave. South Minneapolis, MN 55404 Tel. (612) 870-3420 Fax. (612) 870-4846 mmuller@iatp.org
Biodiversity Yardstick*	Center for Agriculture and Environment	• score the impact of agricultural practices on biodiversity • score based on census data multiplied by social significance factor for each species • may be used as policy tool (e.g. incentives) to reward agricultural practices that benefit biodiversity	• vascular plants • mammals (except mice) • birds • amphibians • reptiles • butterflies	Center for Agriculture and Environment P.O. Box 10015 3505 AA
Financial Aid to Private Landowners	University of MN Extension Service	• a 15-page guide to 52 programs available to private landowners for private land acquisition, management, conservation and protection of natural resources in Minnesota.	• Cost-Share Programs • Loans • Grants • Conservation Easements/ Land Retirement Programs • Land Donations	http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/naturalresources/DD5946.html Hard copy at no cost by contacting your local County Extension Office or by calling 800/876-8636 and asking for Publication FO-5946-GO

* CONTAINS WILDLIFE/BIODIVERSITY CRITERIA

Appendix 2. Wildlife Tourism Marketing Tips[1]

Advertising

1. Draw a 50-mile radius line around your site to identify accessible wildlife-viewing areas, including public lands. Advertise as so.

2. Direct marketing/mailing to likely wildlife tourism participants (buy mailing lists from American Birding Association).

3. Update print, radio and TV ads to include wildlife viewing opportunities.

4. Publicize facility in birding magazines like Minnesota Ornithologists Union or Birder's World, American Bird.

On-Farm Improvements

1. Enhance or develop trails in immediate area through forest, along meadow or lakeshore (e.g., benches, boardwalks).

2. Set up wildlife-viewing blinds in marshes. Blinds are also great for photographing prairie chickens or sharp-tailed grouse.

3. Birding from boats/pontoons.

4. Put up bird feeders/bath/fountain — get suggestions from local bird store or bird club members.

5. Create a butterfly garden.

6. Plant fruiting trees: Red splendor crab, in cherry; mountain ash, viburnum, dogwood, etc.

7. Be willing to provide Early Bird Breakfasts/Coffee or Pack Box Lunches for early-rising birders.

Use these Resources

1. Order magazine subscriptions - Minnesota Volunteer, Birder's World, Bird Watcher's Digest.

2. Maintain supplies of wildlife checklists, facility brochures, maps to wildlife watching sites, etc.

3. Secure program schedule of events/field trips at local parks, bird club, wild bird store, nature center, etc.

4. Buy wildlife videos for use in lobby, recreation room, and commons area.

5. Put up wildlife and or bird posters and info in lobby or lounge.

6. Buy binoculars/spotting scopes for visitors/guests to use - check with local optic/camera store for discounts.

7. Buy field guides and related books for display and reference on your farm.

8. Create 52-week phenology notebook/calendar for tourists (calendar of natural events, e.g., robins arrived today, trilliums blooming, etc).

9. Create a place for guests to write their wildlife observations or post their photos for wildlife.

Networking

1. Network with other local businesses (restaurants, lodging, birding stores) to promote wildlife tourism. Offer discount packages.

2. Partner with resorts/B&Bs in other regions/ biomes for "birding packages" (e.g. Fergus Falls-Detroit Lakes-Thief River Falls; Detroit Lakes-Duluth; Duluth-Wabasha 5/7/10 DAY PACKAGES).

On-farm Events

1. Sponsor a photo contest for wildlife photographed while people stay at your place. Use winning photos in advertising materials.

2. Sponsor birding events for "Beginning Birdwatchers" or "Birdwatching for Parents and their Children." Work with local Environmental Education/Nature Center.

[1] Adapted from Lambrecht, A.L. Wildlife Tourism Marketing Tips: 25 things I can do to increase Wildlife Tourism. Wildlife Tourism Workshop, Nongame Fish and Wildlife Program, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 11/99.